

William E. Colby



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97-269

April 27, 1983

The Honorable Daniel P. Inouye
Senate Select Committee on Intelligence
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Inouye:

Your great support and effectiveness secured the passage of the CIA Spouses Retirement Equity Act of 1982 (P.L. 97-269). The work that you and Chairman Goldwater did on this project is enormously appreciated by the spouses affected and by those of us who believe that it was a long overdue recognition of the substantial contribution spouses provide to the mission of the Agency in its work abroad.

The 1982 Act vested annuities in spouses divorced after November 15, 1982 provided the marriage had continued for at least 10 years of agency service and involved at least five years of overseas service. The November 15, 1982 date was set to avoid retroactive interference with existing retirement and survivor payments and to avoid conflict with existing divorce decrees and property settlements. However, unfortunately, the Act provided no relief for spouses divorced on November 14, 1982 and earlier nor for divorced spouses of CIARDS participants who retired before the effective date of the Act. When you introduced the CIA Spouses Retirement Equity Act in the Senate, you said, "I feel that at some future date we should consider providing additional benefits to this group (those excluded) in recognition of their important service."

Contact has been maintained with a group of spouses in the Washington area excluded from the 1982 Act. It is plain that these are a highly deserving and needy group for the kind of protection contemplated in the Act. As a result, I have been authorized to recommend to the Select Committees of the Senate and House that consideration be given to action to provide appropriate benefits to these excluded spouses. I have sent the attached letter to The Honorable Edward P. Boland, Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, outlining a proposal on this subject and discussing what I believe is a persuasive case for action to benefit them.

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It is our understanding that the Senate Committee has already acted on this year's authorization bill for the Agency so that it is late to include this in the normal process of your Committee. However, it is also our understanding that the House Committee has not yet acted, so the attached letter suggests that they might include appropriate action in their bill which could then become the subject of conference between the two committees.

You will note that the estimate of the funds which would be required is quite a modest one and that the group affected is a rather small and obviously declining one. Nonetheless, the cases are particularly persuasive of the active contribution made by the individuals involved, two of whom were witnesses in the hearings leading to the earlier legislation, and their need for this kind of financial support. Many of these spouses currently do not receive alimony, which in any case ceases with the sponsor's death, and a number have considerable concerns about their future when they pass their current employable ages.

Again, we express our deep appreciation for your most effective and sympathetic support in the passage of the 1982 Act. We do presume to hope that that same spirit will find you sympathetic with this attempt to include this small additional group within the benefits to be provided by that legislation.

Sincerely,

W.E. Colby

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Enclosure